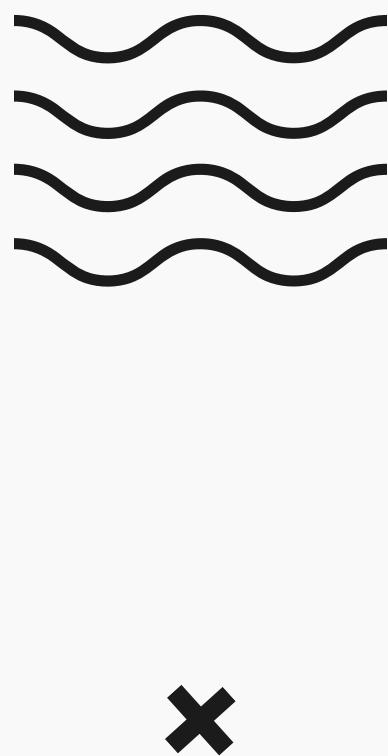


Virtual Bookkeeping



What is Virtual Bookkeeping?



Virtual bookkeeping allows an accountant or bookkeeper to provide accounting services for a client remotely. Telecommuting positions are becoming more common as businesses seek creative ways to find a balance between staffing arrangements and workloads. A virtual bookkeeping arrangement can be beneficial to both the business and the bookkeeper in terms of flexibility and cost.

How It Works

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1. To enable virtual bookkeeping, the business grants the bookkeeper remote access to its server, software and financial documents. The bookkeeper signs onto the company's secure network from his home computer and accesses the documents just as he would if logged onto an on-site company computer and installs the company's bookkeeping software onto his computer. Depending on the arrangement, either the worker or the client may purchase and register the software, but both must use the same program and version to ensure proper transfer and communication of the files.
2. If the bookkeeper is employed by the company, she will be paid according to the employer's payroll policies and cycle. If the bookkeeper is working as an independent contractor, she will invoice the business for the services performed and the client will remit payment in accordance to its contractor payment policy.

Employer Benefits

A virtual bookkeeper may be appealing to a company because of the cost savings and flexibility associated with this arrangement. Virtual bookkeepers do not require office space or supplies, and those working as contractors require no insurance, benefits or employment taxes -- a huge savings for the employer. Virtual bookkeepers offer flexible availability and can work as little or as much as the business needs; this can be especially beneficial for small businesses that may not need a full-time on-site bookkeeper or whose financial services needs fluctuate.



Bookkeeper Benefits

Accountants and bookkeepers may decide to work from home in a virtual capacity for many reasons. The most common is the schedule flexibility that appeals to many workers, particularly at-home parents and individuals with disabilities. As long as the work is completed by the client's specified deadline, the bookkeeper is free to work autonomously to accomplish her tasks. The prospect of not having to leave home for work is another appealing benefit as this can save the bookkeeper money on gas, automobile maintenance and child care. Ambitious virtual bookkeepers may opt to work for multiple clients.

